

NIFA in the News – Week of February 27, 2012

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In the News

USDA grants support local efforts (Agri-View 2/23). The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced recently 27 grants to local organizations to build community food systems and fight hunger and food insecurity. The awards were made by USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) through its Community Food Projects program. The new projects, totaling \$4.8 million in funding, include a teen-run community kitchen incubator, faith-based community food assessments, a program to help indigenous people return to healthful eating, and a youth-led food security movement. Community Food Projects have been funded in nearly 350 communities in 48 states in the program's 15-year history. [Link](#)

GRANT HELPS AID FARMERS (Portland Press Herald 2/26). The University of Maine's work to address the needs of farmers with disabilities got a federal funding boost last week. The school received a nearly \$166,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's AgrAbility program, according to the offices of Republican Maine Sens. Susan Collins and Olympia Snowe. The grant was among \$4.1 million provided nationwide by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture to land grant universities that join with nonprofit disability organizations to aid farmers with disabilities. [Link](#)

Disabled farmer program gets boost (Kennebec Journal 2/26). The University of Maine's work to address the needs of farmers with disabilities got a federal funding boost last week. The school received a nearly \$166,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's AgrAbility program, according to the offices of Republican Maine Sens. Susan Collins and Olympia Snowe. The grant was among \$4.1 million provided nationwide by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture to land grant universities that join with nonprofit disability organizations to aid farmers with disabilities. [Link](#)

ZeaChem to Develop “Drop-In” Advanced Biofuels (Domestic Fuel 2/27). ZeaChem, a developer of biorefineries for the conversion of renewable biomass into

sustainable fuels and chemicals, will receive a portion of a \$40m grant from USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) through the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Regional Coordinated Agricultural Project (CAP). The USDA project will establish regional systems for the sustainable production of bioenergy and bio-based products. [Link](#)

AgrAbility Grants awarded to help disabled Americans (Fence Post 2/27). The USDA has awarded 23 grants to organizations to respond to the growing population of farmers living with a disability. These grants will help thousands of people with disabilities to continue their ag professions. A total of \$4.1 million in grants was awarded and made possible by the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Projects that will be funded include educating professionals on how to assist those with disabilities. Colorado State University, the University of Nebraska, the University of Wyoming, and Kansas State University are among those receiving grants. [Link](#)

USDA Awards Grants to Expand Access for Disabled Farmers (Wisconsin Farm Bureau 2/28). Responding to the needs of a growing population of farmers and ranchers living with a disability, the U.S. Department of Agriculture today awarded 23 grants to organizations to help thousands of people with disabilities continue their chosen agricultural professions. USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) awarded the grants, totaling \$4.1 million, through the AgrAbility program. [Link](#)

ZeaChem receives €8.93 million (Bioenergy Insight 2/28). ZeaChem is to receive \$12 million (€8.93 million) as part of a larger grant awarded by USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). The grant, worth a total of \$40 million (29.76 million), is being distributed through the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), Regional Coordinated Agricultural Project (CAP). The project is aimed at establishing regional systems for sustainable production of bioenergy and bio-based products. [Link](#)

Grant to tackle region's wine industry obstacles (North Platte Bulletin 2/28). A USDA grant to the University of Nebraska will tackle obstacles for vineyards, wineries, tasting rooms and tourism to bring cold hardy grapes to a wider market. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln viticulture program is part of a multi-state team that received a \$2.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture Specialty Crop Research Initiative, officials said Tuesday. [Link](#)

Learn to be a farmer or rancher (Santa Rosa Press Democrat 2/28). A new program at SRJC's Shone Farm teaches beginning farmers and ranchers how to build, operate and manage successful enterprises in the increasingly difficult business of Sonoma County's agriculture. Funded through grant money allocated by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Sonoma County's Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program is one of several being planted across the country.

Developed in 2011 by the Regents of the University of California and the UC Cooperative Extension of Sonoma County, the program is set up to run for three years, serving 25 student farmers and ranchers each year. [Link](#)

UNL Viticulture Part of \$2.5 Million Grant to Tackle Wine Industry Obstacles (Syracuse Journal Democrat 2/28). The University of Nebraska-Lincoln viticulture program is part of a multi-state team that received a \$2.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture Specialty Crop Research Initiative. The grant will tackle the obstacles in vineyards, wineries, tasting rooms and tourism to bring cold hardy grapes to a wider market. [Link](#)

Researchers identify PRRS genetic marker (Pork Magazine 2/29). A consortium of scientists from around the country has discovered a genetic marker in pigs that identifies whether or not the animal has a reduced susceptibility to porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS). The research team that led to this marker discovery includes scientists at USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Kansas State University and Iowa State University. The researchers continue to be funded by the PRRS Host Genetics Consortium, a nationwide effort originally funded by NPB; the Coordinated Agricultural Project program; the National Institute of Food and Agriculture and the U.S. Swine Genome Coordinator for the National Animal Genome Research Program. [Link](#)

Loan repayment program promotes food animal practice (AVMA News 2/29). During the first round of the VMLRP, more than 50 veterinarians signed contracts with the Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture to participate in the program. On Feb. 1, NIFA announced the second round of grants, with nearly 80 veterinarians signing contracts. [Link](#)

ZeaChem Signs Deal to Develop Drop-In Advanced Biofuels (Ethanol Market 2/29). ZeaChem, Inc. has successfully completed contract negotiations to receive its portion of a US\$40-million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) through the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Regional Coordinated Agricultural Project (CAP). The USDA project will establish regional systems for the sustainable production of bioenergy and bio-based products. [Link](#)

Tackling cold-climate wine industry obstacles (Western Farm Press 3/1). The University of Nebraska-Lincoln viticulture program is part of a multi-state team that received a \$2.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture Specialty Crop Research Initiative. The grant will tackle the obstacles in vineyards, wineries, tasting rooms and tourism to bring cold hardy grapes to a wider market. [Link](#)

Nutrient Management Plans: A Study in Cause and Effect (Newswise 3/1). In a new study, funded in part by the Agricultural Food Research Initiative of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, researchers from the University of Connecticut and

the U.S. Department of Agriculture tracked what happened when four dairy farms implemented NMPs during a several year time span. [Link](#)

USDA Funding Available for Organic Research (National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition 3/1). This week, USDA announced the availability of \$3.8 million in grants to fund research on organic production systems, under the Integrated Organic Transitions Program administered by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). The goal of the Organic Transitions Program is to improve the competitiveness of organic crop and livestock producers, as well as those who are adopting organic practices. In previous years, this grant program has focused on the impact of organic production systems on soil and water quality. This year, the program's focus will shift to include projects that examine the environmental services that these systems provide, including their impact on climate change mitigation and greenhouse gas emissions. [Link](#)

Column: Doing our part to keep the farm economy strong (Worthington Daily Globe 3/2). As we move forward in 2012, Minnesota and the rest of the country have an economic stake in continuing to ensure a strong farm economy. This year, Congress will soon take up a new Farm Bill to help give farmers the tools they need to stay prosperous. To foster continued innovation and growth, we need strong support for agriculture research and development. That's why I've fought to fund key agriculture research programs, including USDA's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, which funds critical agriculture research at the University of Minnesota and across the country. [Link](#)

NPC works to maintain federal funding (The Packer 3/2). Efforts by the White House to cut the national debt could put millions of research dollars in jeopardy, but the National Potato Council isn't going to let that happen without a fight. The programs in question are the USDA Agricultural Research Service Pest and Disease Research and USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture Potato Breeding Research. Both programs have received funding from Congress for more than two decades. Keeling said the ARS program received \$1.4 million in 2011, while the NIFA program received \$1.35 million. [Link](#)

AgrAbility Project gives hope (High Plains Journal 3/2). Many Oklahomans have been farming and ranching their entire lives. It is what they know. It is what they love and it is how they make a living. Is the family also prepared for changes impacting them due to normal wear and tear on their bodies due to aging or disabling conditions such as arthritis? Oklahoma AgrAbility was established in 2002, and is one of the 22 state projects funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Institute of Food and Agriculture. [Link](#)

Published on March 5, 2012 / Jennifer Martin